

# Chapter 2

of the South African Constitution deals with the Bill of Rights; Section 29 guarantees every child a right to education and Government is responsible for providing it. Chapter 9 (Improving Education, Training and Innovation) of the 2030 National Development Plan (NDP) also calls for all stakeholders (private, public and NGO sectors) to work together in delivering improved education. As the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDOE), our Provincial Development Plan is grounded in the NDP, but it is shaped by critical priorities specific to the Eastern Cape. We have identified the following seven strategic goals:

- \* Improved quality of teaching and learning through timeous supply and effective utilisation and development of teachers.
- \* Adequate quality infrastructure provided on the basis of a data- driven infrastructure plan.
- \* Provision of quality Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM) and furniture to all schools through data-driven planning and provisioning.
- \* Improved assessment of learning.
- \* Improved quality of Grade R teaching and learning through training of teachers and provision of readers.
- \* Improved school functionality through effective governance, management and monitoring.
- \* Improved learning outcomes through partnerships and stakeholder engagement.

The objective of improved learning outcomes through partnerships led to us signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the PSP project funders, represented by the DG Murray Trust. We decided to be involved precisely because of the understanding that education improvement in the province requires collaboration among different stakeholders. We decided to pilot PSP as one of our tailored improvement initiatives to strengthen the quality of public schools, demonstrate effective models of public school improvement, strengthen public school governance models, develop educators, and

implement interventions to improve the quality of public education for learners in eight public schools in the rural area of Willowvale in the Eastern Cape.

I had an opportunity to interact with our implementing partners recently for the first time since I came into office on 27 May 2019. I was quite pleased with the interventions they have implemented since January 2018 when they started working with the schools. Whilst I would not hasten to say that the schools are on a different trajectory, the data they presented around early grade reading for the primary schools and the high school matric results for the past two years is promising. The high school, Dumalisile Comprehensive's matric pass rate has improved from 32% in 2016 and 38% in 2017, to 70.7% in 2018 and 65.5% in 2019. Our implementing partner, Axiom Education, reported that PSP schools' foundation phase perform significantly better than an estimated "rural average" on Early Grade Reading Assessment (both on the percentage of children reading at Grade Level, and the percentage of children who cannot read a single word). They also highlighted some operational challenges such as debilitating infrastructure, learner transport and resource shortages, which have hindered the work that they do with the schools. It is our intention to assist the project to achieve its objectives and, in this regard, a team of different directorates will visit the schools at the appropriate time to address the identified challenges.

We are grateful to our PSP funding partners for the resources they have invested to support our schools. The task of providing quality education to every child is enormous and will only be realised when all stakeholders work collaboratively and in partnership towards a common goal.

**HON. FD GADE**  
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